

€cybermission

ACCEPT THE CHALLENGE



Virtual Judges

Thank you for your interest in €cybermission—the Army's web-based science, math and technology competition for students in grades 6 through 9—and the Virtual Judge Program! The €cybermission Beta Test was completed in Spring 2002, and €cybermission's first year began with Regional competitions in October 2002 and ended with the National Judging and Educational Event May 27–30, 2003, in Washington, DC. The following are some Frequently Asked Questions that will help you understand the role of a Virtual Judge and the importance the judges will have in making €cybermission a successful and viable program for students everywhere.

What Is €CYBERMISSION?

€cybermission is a unique science, math and technology competition for students in grades 6 through 9 because it takes place completely via the Internet. It also encourages and rewards a diverse range of proficiency levels, interests and backgrounds. The competition promotes self-discovery and encourages students to recognize the real-life applications of these disciplines. Student teams first identify a problem in their community that is related to either: **Health & Safety, Arts & Entertainment, Sports & Recreation or the Environment**. After formulating a hypothesis, teams conduct research and experiments. Finally, students post their findings and conclusions on the €cybermission web site in the form of a "Mission Folder," or team project.

Virtual Judges will conduct their evaluations via the Internet, on the €cybermission web site, to determine the Regional winning teams. First place winners will then advance to the National competition, where they will have the opportunity to present their winning projects to a panel of live judges.

Why Is the Army Sponsoring a Competition for Students?

The Army has long recognized the fundamental importance of science, math and technology to our global competitiveness and especially our national security. Army leadership has also acknowledged a national decrease in the number of students interested in science, math and technology careers nationwide and the ever-growing need to remain globally competitive in these fields.

- €cybermission enables the Army to return something to America's communities for the service of their sons and daughters to the nation
- €cybermission supports the nation's commitment to education and to the achievement of excellence in math and science
- Our national security will increasingly require the latest in science and technology skills

An €CYBERMISSION Virtual Judge—Who, What, Where and When?

Virtual Judges are volunteers who have varying backgrounds and areas of expertise, but also have an interest in promoting science, math and technology. They are solicited nationwide, and are from industry or academic and educational organizations—including



Virtual Judges

retirees! They must, however, know how to use a computer and have Internet access—and above all else be willing to commit the time to conduct thorough and objective evaluations.

Ecybermission Virtual Judges will independently evaluate and score approximately 20 Mission Folders online. A team's online submission will be randomly assigned to three judges to ensure that each Mission Folder is reviewed and scored objectively against the following criteria:

- Application of Science, Math and Technology (40%)
- Innovation, Originality and Creativity (20%)
- Benefit to the Community (20%)
- Team Collaboration and Communication (20%)

It will take a Virtual Judge approximately 1 hour to review each team's Mission Folder—requiring an estimated total of 20–25 hours to review all online assignments during the 3-week judging period.

The Regional judging period will run from February 26, 2004, to March 18, 2004, and will be conducted completely online. Virtual Judges will have the convenience of reviewing their teams' Mission Folders from anywhere they have an Internet connection. Judges will be provided written guidance and can also contact the **Ecybermission** Judge Coordinator or the Help Desk during the judging period if questions arise.

At the end of the Regional judging period, each non-Government Virtual Judge will receive a small honorarium for participating. The judges will also be asked to provide feedback on **Ecybermission** and the judging process.

How Can I Find Out More?

Please visit the **Ecybermission** web site at www.ecybermission.com for general competition information. Additional reference information and a Judge's Guide are also available on the web site. Please forward additional inquiries to judgecoordinator@ecybermission.com.

We hope to hear from you!